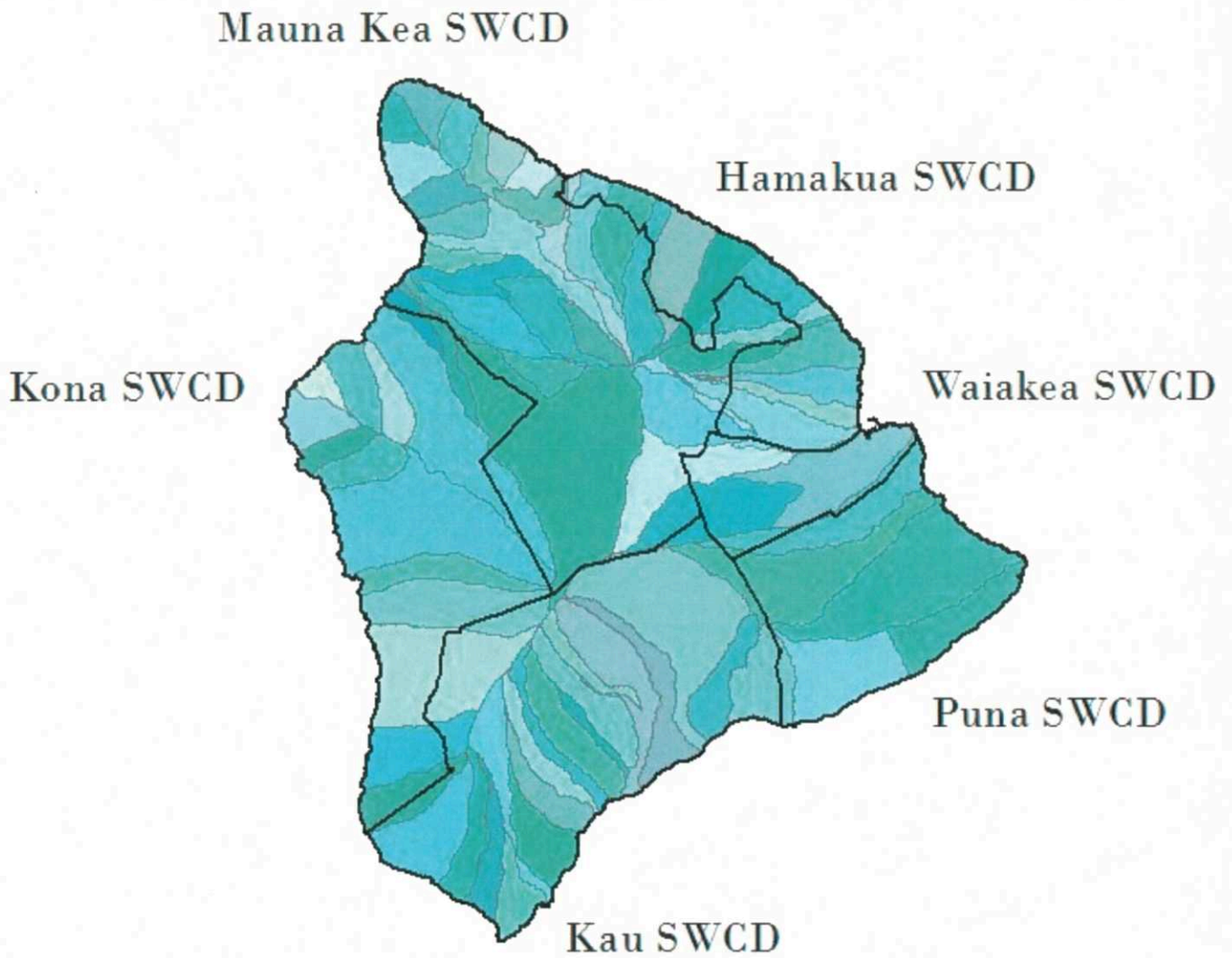


Hawai`i Island

Soil and Water Conservation District

2014 Annual Report



The cover for this year's report is a map showing Hawai'i island's watershed boundaries. A watershed is defined as an area or ridge of land that separates waters flowing to different rivers, basins, or seas. The condition of our watersheds are extremely vital to both the terrestrial and aquatic life of our islands. It is important to realize that from mauka to makai the land is connected and what happens upstream will have an affect on the ocean.

COUNTY OF HAWAII

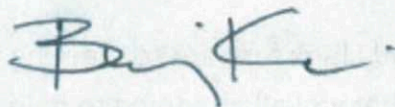
MAYOR'S MESSAGE 2015

On behalf of the people of the County of Hawai'i, it is an honor to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the staff and volunteers of the Hawai'i Island Soil and Water Conservation Districts whose achievements are documented in the 2015 SWCD Annual Report.

Often times unsung heroes, the Hawai'i Island Soil and Water Conservation District staff and volunteers work tirelessly to preserve and to protect Hawai'i's natural resources and our pristine environment. This dedication provides technical conservation assistance, continuing education, and underscores the value of protecting these essential agricultural resources.

Your work truly benefits the people of Hawai'i now and for generations to come.

Aloha,



Billy Kenoi
Mayor





United States Department of Agriculture



Bruce Petersen, NRCS Director
of the Pacific Island Area

Greetings District Partners,

Thank you for the warm welcome!

My first two months in the islands have been full of meeting new people and seeing new projects. It is very exciting to see conservation practices being implemented throughout the islands. With the recent announcement of interim conservation activity focused on feral ungulates in Hawaii County and the Territory of Guam, I received a tremendous amount of feedback on this pilot initiative. Like all of you, I want to see this succeed, so hopefully we can broaden the spectrum with more opportunity next fiscal year. As NRCS celebrates 80 years of conservation, I look forward to our continued work together in "Helping People Help the Land." I value our partnership and look forward to continued communication and growth together.

If you're interested in learning about me, I started with the Soil Conservation Service, now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) 28 years ago. My experience with NRCS consists of working in Minnesota, Wyoming, and Nevada. My educational degree is in agriculture Business Management from the University of Minnesota. I served in several field and state office positions, most recently as the State Conservationist in Nevada.

I am very excited to be here and I look forward to meeting you if I have not done so already. I appreciate the time and energy that you all are doing to help our customers. We certainly cannot do this alone. Thank you for your continued partnership!

~Bruce Petersen, NRCS Director of PIA



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www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov

Message From President

Hawai`i Association of Conservation Districts



This year, the East Hawai`i Districts are looking forward to hosting the HACD Annual conference in Hilo. There will be many informative speakers, impressive tours, good food and conversation! It's always good to have all the different parts of HACD come together so we have a chance to exchange ideas and reinforce our mission to help the farmers while protecting the 'aina.

"Buy Local it Matters"

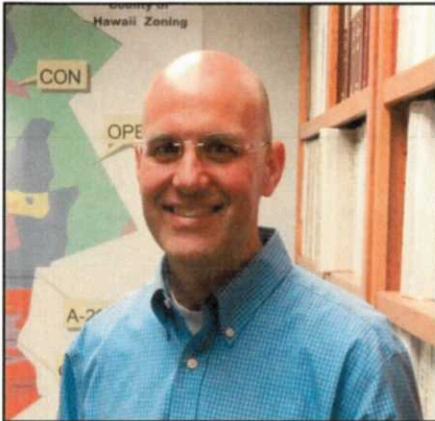


Aloha, Brenda

Brenda Iokepa-Moses, HACD President

Kona Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair



Greg Hendrickson, Chair

On behalf of all our farmers, ranchers and forest landowners, the stewards of our lands, I want to say thank you for your dedication and hard work. Working the land in the North and South Kona Districts is not easy; we have a variety of challenges faced by few across the country. Our young rocky soils, the slope of our land even our land's ability to grow a lot of things relatively quickly (things that we may prefer not to be growing on our land) can create challenges that require constant attention.

A farmer in Kona will always have to provide organic material to the land (whether it is grass clippings, county green waste, or other mulch). Our soils need regular organic inputs in order to maintain their health. The ingenuity of our farmers in building good soil has led to vastly diverse crops which range from avocados to yacons.

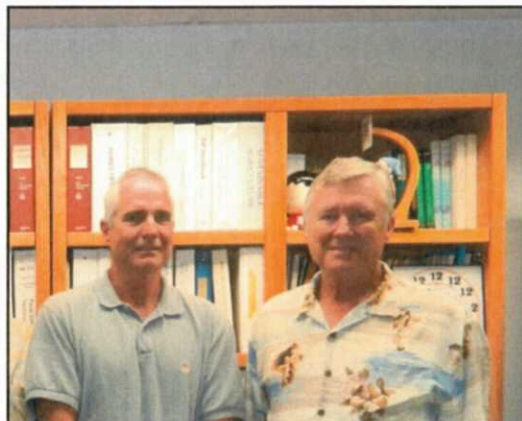
Our ranchers, with their large swaths of land, work toward ensuring our mauka lands are productive and healthy for their livestock and many incorporate forestry practices that create productive and healthy wildlife habitat.

There are many cooperators in Kona who are primarily interested in doing forestry work to help ensure there are native forests and wildlife for their great-grandchildren and beyond. Others incorporate timber production as a land use mixed with native tree plantings.

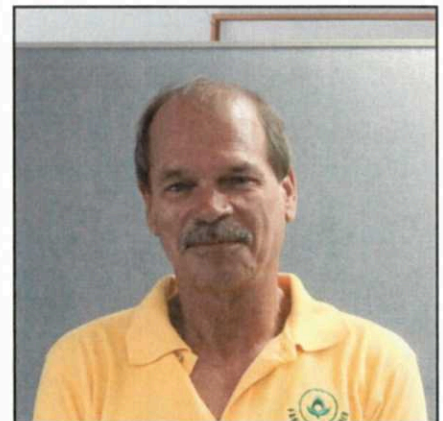
All of them, our farmers, ranchers and local foresters, know that it all begins with the soil. They know they cannot afford to see it wash away and disappear into thin air, as organic soils do if left uncovered. For their efforts, the North and South Kona community members should be grateful for the food and beautiful landscape they provide us.



Dave Fischer, Treasurer



Keith Unger, Secretary Rick Robinson, Director



Jeff Knowles, Vice Chair

Kona Soil and Water Conservation District

2014 Cooperators of the Year

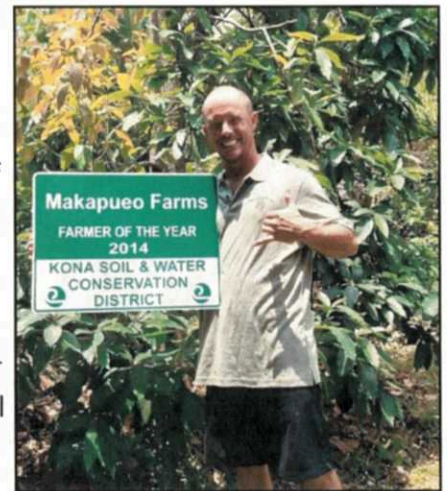
The Kona SWCD represents an incredibly diverse group of land users with equally diverse visions for their land. This year we honor three of those land users. The differences in their operations coupled with their common desire to improve their natural resources are what led to the district wanting to honor all three of them.

Makapueo Farms, owned and managed by Kaipo Sheen, grows coffee on about 200 acres of land on many different parcels. Kaipo became a cooperator in 2007 and started his coffee business on an 8 acre parcel. His land had virtually no soil, not an unfamiliar site in Kona, having what we generally refer to as a rock farm. Kaipo, with assistance from NRCS, applied mulch by the truck load to this parcel and 8 years later has established 4-5 inches of soil. There are still rocks that are visible but the land is a world away from where it started. Over the years Makapueo Farms has grown from that one parcel. Today they manage acres of coffee for other land users as well as managing additional leasehold land they control and with all this coffee they have



Makapueo Orchard before mulching, after initial mulching, after several mulches.

opened two coffee shops one at the King Kamehameha Hotel and one in South Kona.



Kaipo Sheen, Owner of Makapueo Farm

Richard Fowler along with his wife Roswitha, his daughter Angelica and her husband Richard have created **HOME O KAHALU`U FARM** on almost 9 acres. They became cooperators in 2010 and have incorporated agro-forestry practices to develop a seed



Left to Right: Richard Fowler, Roswitha Fowler, Angelica Stevens, Richards Stevens

farm for native species. Their premier crop is pili grass, a native grass that is traditionally used for thatched roofing. It is a bunch grass that generally grows to 18-24" and for use in native plant restoration projects, or landscaping around your home or business. HOME O KAHALU`U FARM also uses it as conservation cover and others are planning to use it in buffer zones between land parcels. It really is a versatile grass satisfying many land use needs. Other crops include coffee, lilikoi, pumpkins, pineapple, turmeric, and papaya.

Cooperator of the Year Continued...

Waiono Native Forest Preserve was the vision of Pam Parker which started to make a reality in 2010. She wanted a forest her grandchildren could romp around in. After planting well over 3,000 native tree and shrub species on 16 acres she is well on her way to providing it. Like many land users who have raw land Pam first had to get through the Christmas Berry and Guava that was infesting her land which is a project all unto itself. With that completed planting could begin. Grasses continue to be a maintenance challenge but as the trees continue to grow expanding their canopy and naturally reproduce increasing their numbers the grasses will become less and less of a problem.



Pam Parke, Owner and Visionary of Waiono Native Forest Preserve



New Koa Stand



Newly Established Koa Forest Intermixed With Existing 'ōhi'a Lehua and Other Natives



Previous Invasive Vegetation (Guava and Christmas berry) Before Restoration

NRCS and Kona SWCD Activities and Staff

It was a very busy for the Kona Soil and Water Conservation District. From signing up cooperators to doing site visits to participating in some way with special events it was a busy, exciting and fun year.

We did 72 site visits this year with many (21) for the purpose of setting up a feral swine tour for some NRCS staffers from Honolulu and the mainland. We also provided a 25 page report on our soils and the impacts feral swine have on them. This was in an attempt to convince NRCS our soils need protection from being tilled by feral pigs and fencing is the best way to do it.

The other site visits were at cooperator requests because they had natural resource problems they were being challenged by or because of something that worked out great for them and they wanted to share the experience. One of those has to do with an electric fence to keep pigs out of some crop area.

We approved 21 new cooperators this year and they range from ranchers, to coffee farmers, to lettuce farmers to farmers with much diversification of crops and to forest land owners as well.

Some of the special events we participated in include helping out with a tree planting day at the West Hawaii Veterans' Cemetery and helping out on restoring the Palamanui Trail. We also helped out at the annual Kona Coffee Festival working with Kona Farm Bureau at the festival's Coffee Picking Contest. We participated in the Kona Coffee Expo as we have since the event first took place.

We were in two local elementary schools demonstrating our water model. The model demonstrates the water cycle and groundwater's role in it. The students also learn that we can pollute our surface water without ever putting anything in it, all you have to do is pollute the groundwater. Our demonstrations took place at the Kekaha Kai Elementary School and the Innovation School. All of the students were quite interested in what was happening with the model when we "polluted" it with food coloring.



Jessica Schmelz

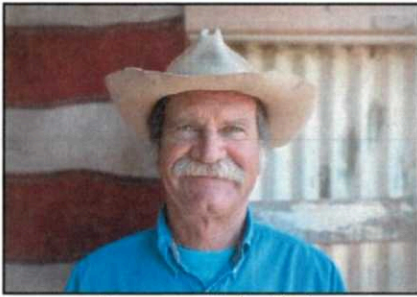
Training that the district staff participated in included hydrology training, soil health training, sheep and goat management training, nutrient management training as well as some required computer security training.



L-R: Carl Rossetti , Jacky Vega, Mike Kolman, Mary Robblee, Bernard Vermeulen, Laura Nelson

Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair



Pono von Holt, Chair

Greetings from the Mauna Kea District! This past year has been a busy and productive year for our district. Across the 740,000 acres that make up the Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District there are a multitude of different agricultural and conservation achievements, and innovations happening every day. It is a privilege and an honor for the MKSWCD to assist the our producers and land stewards in their work. We understand that being a agricultural producer in Hawai'i is not just a career but a passion, a tradition, and a challenge. The district is proud to support our community through the development of conservation plans, the compliance with the Country Grading and Grubbing Ordinance, participation in community education and outreach activities, facilitating bulk orders of cover crop seed from mainland vendors, providing rental equipment to farmers, and technical assistance.

We would like to welcome Dr. Tom Baribault to the district board as a director. Tom has been serving as an associate director for the MKSWCD for the past year. This spring he was approved by the Board of Land and Natural Resources to serve as a director for the next three years. Tom has a strong background in forestry including a Ph.D in Forestry, with a minor in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Michigan State University. He is currently a research forester with Forest Solutions Inc. and living in Kamuela. The board greatly welcomes his knowledge and expertise. Another new addition to our district board is Charlie White. Charlie has recently started attending our district meetings as an associate director. He is a Hawaiian Homestead farmer currently growing vegetables in Waimea. The board is happy to welcome Charlie and is grateful for his insight and participation. The district board meets every second Wednesday of the month from 4-6pm in the USDA-NRCS Waimea Field Office. This meeting is open to the public and participation is welcome. For more information about the district go to www.maunakeaswcd.org

We would like to acknowledge and thank Matt Wung and the staff of the USDA-NRCS Waimea Filed office for their never ending support of the district and the community. It has been a pleasure to work with them both as a district official and as a agricultural producer. The Mauna Kea District would also like to thank the County of Hawai'i, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources , and the University of Hawai'i Cooperative Extension Service , and others for their financial and technical support that allows us to serve our conservation and agricultural community.



Chris Robb, Director



Tom Baribault, Director



Monty Richards, Director



Charlie White, Associate



Brad Lau, Treasurer

Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District

2014 Cooperators of the Year



NRCS Engineer Drew Stout (left) and Benjie Kent

Farmer of the Year: Kohala Mountain Educational Farm

Benjie Kent, owner and operator of Kohala Mountain Educational Farm, was selected as the 2014 farmer of the year for his outstanding work as a farmer, his dedication to educating children and adults about agriculture, and his excellent execution of his conservation plan. A native of Missouri, Benjie opened the Kohala Mountain Educational Farm in 2012. Since then the farm has done annual a pumpkin patch and corn maze, a Mothers Day lei making celebration, and number of class field trips and educational demonstrations. Working with NRCS and



MKSWCD the Kohala Mountain Educational

Farm has developed a conservation plan that is and will have great success and benefit for both the farm and the natural environment. The conservation plan will incorporate cover crops, crop rotation, and residue management to benefit the soil health and biology, and native windbreaks to help protect his crops and increase beneficial pollinator habitat. The MKSWCD is happy to award Benjie and the Kohala Mountain Educational Farm our Farmer of the year award and looks forward to seeing the future of his farm.

Rancher of the Year: Stone Ranch

Clayson Stone and his family started working with MKSWCD and NRCS in 2011 developing a conservation plan for their cattle grazing operation in Waimea. The Stone's have done tremendous work on their ranch implementing a intensive grazing system, installing cross fencing, rehabilitating critical areas with desirable forages, and installing watering facilities. They're work ethic and stewardship of the land are qualities that distinguished them as this year's Rancher of the



Year. Throughout the implementation of their conservation they



Kris Stone and her son, Cleighton

have seen a drastic decrease in the amount of fireweed, a reduction in bare ground and animal trailing, and an increase in desirable forages. Although their conservation plan is nearly complete they have plans for future improvements such as additional paddocks for higher intensity moves, and tree planting to supply additional shelter and protection for their livestock. It is truly wonderful to see the success that the Stone family has had and the MKSWCD could not think of anyone more deserving of the recognition. Congratulations!

Waimea NRCS and MKSWCD Staff



Top left to right: Carolyn Wong, Soil Conservationist. Jared Considine, Soil Conservationist. Hannah Conley, MKSWCD
Bottom left to right: Drew Stout, Area Engineer. Reese Libby, Geography Specialist. Matt Wung, District Conservationist.

Jared and his wife Sada are embarking on a new adventure as they return to Oregon this summer. Jared will be taking a position with the Forest Service and Sada will be teaching at the local preschool. The Waimea Field Office is sad to see them go and wish them the best of luck during this new part of their lives.

Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair

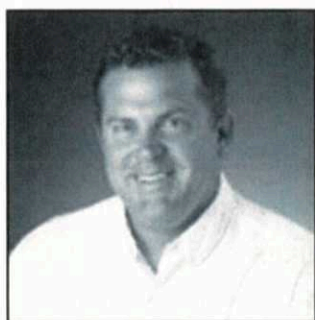


Marissa Harman, Chair

It's been another busy year for the Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District in addressing soil, water and other resource concerns in the local agricultural community. In 2014, the district developed and approved three CTA conservation plans covering more than 4,700 acres. With eleven additional conservation plans contributed by the NRCS and approved by the district, another 4,000 acres have been dedicated to conservation practices aimed at improving local natural resource quality on private agricultural lands. With the increase of small farm-

ers and more land being used for the cultivation of annually-tilled crops, there is much potential for the district to continue implementing programs in conservation education and planning, and complying with the County Grading Ordinance. The district also took part in various outreach activities which included attending a community association meeting, UH Hilo's Earth & Conservation Career Day, giving presentations to several UH Hilo classes, and hosting the 2014 County Conservation Awareness Contest.

The Hamakua SWCD would like to thank our partners, the County of Hawaii, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the University of Hawaii's Cooperative Extension Service, and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources among others for providing the financial and technical resource support we utilize to reach our goals and serve the conservation needs of the community as best we can. The Hamakua SWCD's success in having conservation activities implemented on the land would not be possible without the voluntary cooperation of our producers who are putting conservation into action at the ground level. Mahalo to all who are working towards improving the health of our environment and resource sustainability of our island communities.



Doug Beaton, Director



Dwayne Cypriano,
Director



Dylan Shropshire, Director



Troy Keolanui, Director

Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District

Morris Takemoto, 2014 Cooperator of the Year

Morris Takemoto raises cattle on a 31-acre ranch in Umauma on Hawaii Island. He has worked with NRCS and the SWCD throughout the past several decades. Morris recently returned for assistance after purchasing an adjoining property he had been leasing to implement the rotational grazing that has been working so well on his original parcel.

Morris secured an EQIP 2014 contract to cross fence, install waterlines, add water troughs with heavy use area protection, and implement prescribed grazing. As a recent retiree from the US Postal Service,



Mr. Takemoto dove right into his contract work, meeting or exceeding the standards and specifications of each conservation practice well ahead



of schedule. He's already noticed the reduction in mud and erosion around his troughs from using the Heavy Use Protection and is so impressed, he intends on using the same design as he renovates his original parcel. He voluntarily kept his cattle numbers low during the construction process to avoid

overgrazing of his pasture which is dominated by desirable but sensitive California grass and Baron's grass. In an area that is frequently over run by Wainaku and other undesirable grasses, Morris has managed to keep his desirable forages healthy and productive.

Morris has opened his ranch to NRCS at every request. NRCS recently held a field grazing training for the island's NRCS and SWCD personnel and the Takemoto ranch was one of the selected sites. He is also al-



lowing NRCS to collect forage production data from his pastures over the next several years in order for NRCS to establish a forage production database for Hawaii and the PIA. The Takemoto ranch is a prime example of good forage management and serves as a model for other ranchers with similar soils, elevation and climate.

Morris has been a pleasure to work with and represents the conscientious land owner, land manager and livestock producer that is striving to conserve his natural resources. Congratulations to Morris Takemoto on becoming a 2014 Cooperator of the Year for the Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District!

Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District

Triple D Ranch, 2014 Cooperator of the Year



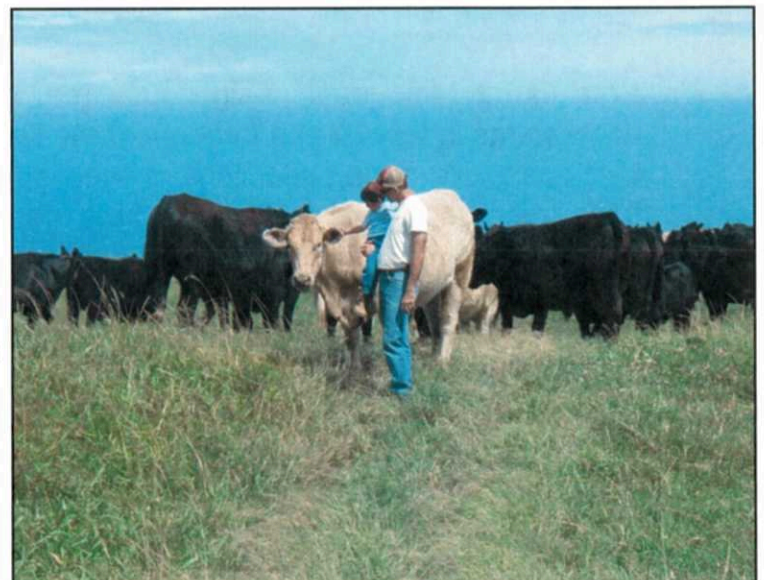
Antone and Duane De Luz

Triple D Ranch currently manages a total of 600 acres between two locations, Ookala and Honokaia, in the Hamakua district of Hawaii Island. Triple D Ranch is a family business being run by Antone De Luz, Jr. and his son, Duane De Luz. Cattle ranching on Hawaii Island has been a De Luz family tradition as they trace their history in the industry as far back as 1906. Currently, they run a grass-fed finishing program, as well as a cow-calf operation to produce wean-offs for their finishing program. They have just under 200 head total at any time throughout the year and typically deliver about 70 animals to market annually. All of their quality beef is sold locally

to Hawaii Beef Producers in Paauilo.

Their success in consistently producing top quality, grass-fed beef lies in their responsible grazing practices. When Triple D Ranch first began leasing the Honokaia property in 1994, it was overgrown by sugarcane and noxious and invasive Christmas berry, tibouchina, ironwood and fleabane with little to no desirable forage grasses. Over the years, they worked with NRCS and the SWCD to reduce invasive species by chemical control, plant desirable forage grasses and legumes, install cross fence for rotational grazing, and install a livestock watering system for their new paddocks. Several of their notable accomplishments through the EQIP program was the installation and reshaping of a 1 million gallon livestock pond and lining a 50,000 sq. ft. catchment area, which have allowed them to become independent of county water. Their 500-acre Honokaia pasture is now dominated by desirable star, pangola, and guinea grasses with clover and perennial peanut legumes and is equipped with a rotational grazing paddock system. Triple D Ranch will continue on improvements at their Ookala pasture and will likely implement similar conservation practices applied at Honokaia.

Duane and Antone have been great cooperators and are leaders in grazing management and marketing. They have hosted one of GLCI's Pasture Walks and have shared Triple D Ranch's grazing management system and marketing strategy for other ranchers. The Hamakua Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to honor Triple D Ranch as a 2014 Cooperator of the Year.



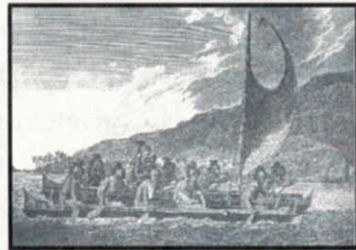
Hala Scale

A THREAT TO HAWAII'S HALA

Lauhala weaving is an art form and tradition deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture and history, but is under peril. Hala trees continue to be threatened by an invasive scale insect, *Thysanococcus pandani*, which causes significant damage to the leaves. Leaves become discolored and break off of the tree, rendering them useless to weavers. It also attacks the tree's fruit and can cause entire crowns of the plant to fall off and die.



Woman weaving a lauhala mat with rolls of prepared hala leaves



Canoe with sails made from lauhala



Yellowing seen on top of leaf (left) and hala scales infesting the underside of the leaves (right)



Photo: Nina Kuna
<http://www.maumagazine.net/Maui-Magazine/March-April-2013/The-Weave-of-History/>

Hala is an important indigenous tree of coastal ecosystems in Hawaii and throughout the Pacific. The hala scale kills young seedlings, preventing new trees from establishing and coastal hala forests from regenerating.

The hala scale was originally discovered in Hana, Maui in 1995, and spread over the entire island within a decade. A small Oahu infestation was also detected in 2013 and HDOA is currently working to eradicate it.



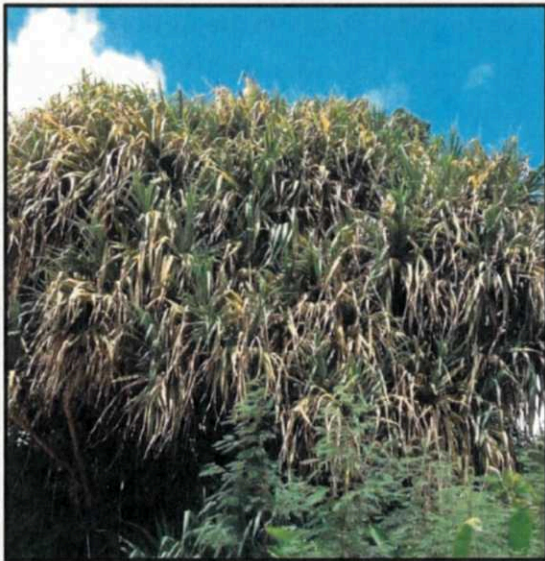
Magnified hala scales



Visible dead leaves and dying crowns on an infested hala tree from the coastal hala forest of Hana, Maui.

In the last year, hala scale was confirmed on Molokai, but the widespread infestation is likely due to its presence for several years. Hana, Maui and Northeastern Molokai are home to Hawaii's last remaining coastal hala forests. The infestation of the hala scale puts these ancient ecosystems at risk of disappearing.

HDOA is looking into exploration for biological control agents of the hala scale, as this is now our last option to save our culturally and ecologically important Hawaiian hala.



Visible dead leaves and damaged crowns on an infested hala tree.



Infested hala crown



Hala scales also infest the fruit, making this another distribution pathway

What people can do *right now*:

- Do **NOT** move hala plants, seeds, or leaves from island to island
- Report new infestations on Oahu and other islands not known to occur:
 - Call **643-PEST** or **973-9538**
 - Email- **hdoa.ppc@Hawaii.gov**

Plant Pest Control Branch, Hawaii Department of Agriculture

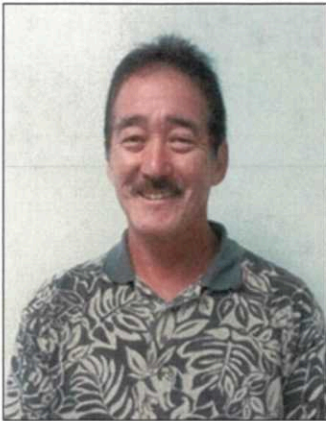
1428 South King Street, Honolulu, HI 96814
Email: hdoa.ppc@hawaii.gov

Phone: (808) 973-9538
Web: <http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/pi/ppc/>

Prepared by: Janis N. Matsunaga
Issued: April 2015

Waiakea Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair



Leslie Takayama, Chair

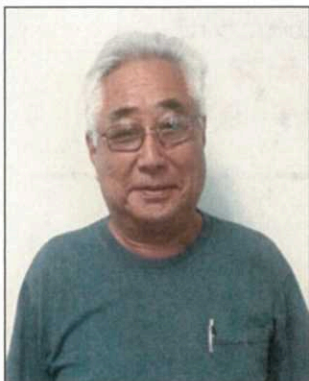
The mission of the Waiakea Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to preserve our land and water resources by assisting in planning and education. The Waiakea Soil and Water Conservation District provides conservation plans for individual agricultural landowners to help control surface water and reduce sediment runoff. The Waiakea District, being in an urban setting, also assists on flood control projects along with the County Department of Public Works (DPW) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) with planning and annual inspection of such projects. Plans are also provided for USDA NRCS Farm Bill cooperators, primarily for Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) with the District acting as a Technical Service Provider (TSP).

We are currently working with Warren Lee and Hawaii County Department of Public Works to improve access to the Pihonua Diversion for our annual inspection. The clearing of the access trail is completed and repairs are being done on the project.

The District would like to thank its partners the County of Hawaii Department of Research & Development, County of Hawaii Department of Public Works, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the University of Hawaii Cooperative Extension Service and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources for all their assistance in our goals. We also would like to thank the cooperators for their earnest efforts towards helping to create and implement the plans.

The Waiakea SWCD would also like to thank all, representing HACD, for all their efforts to secure funding from the State Legislature. The work has not been easy. We at the Waiakea SWCD would like to join with all District Directors to come up with new ideas for better funding. One idea our District wants to promote is the potential use of lands controlled by the Department of Land and Natural Resources. If part of the income from State land leases can be directed to the Districts, we may have sufficient funding to carry out our mission.

If given the land we could produce and sell plant material for windbreaks, ground covers, forage, or native species for natural area restoration. The State is land rich. Let's see if we can tap this wealth for the benefit of conservation. We are currently investigating the potential use of an under used property in the Kukuau district that may serve this purpose. We will keep you all informed as things progress.



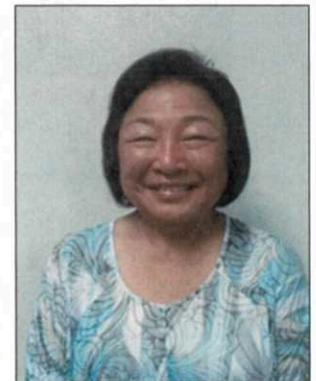
Stanley Haraguchi,
Director



Sheldon Takajo,
Vice Chair



George Mikami,
Secretary



Amy Bugado,
Treasurer

Waiakea Soil and Water Conservation District

Shiroma Farms, 2014 Cooperator of the Year

The late Mr. Thomas Shiroma and his daughter Clarice Suzuki along with their family, own and operate Thomas Shiroma Farms. The 40 acre parcel is located above the Komohana Gardens subdivision within the Waiakea Soil and Water Conservation District. Half of the farm is an ornamental flower farm and the other half is dedicated to pasture, which they raise 14 head of cattle, 12 goats and several sheep.

Mr. Shiroma started working with Waiakea District employee Amelia Drury back in 2011 to develop a conservation plan. After that was completed, his plan was approved for EQIP Funding in 2012. Major resource concerns were inadequate forage quality and quantity and noxious and invasive weeds. With the use



Clarice Suzuki and NRCS Employee Spencer Nagata

of a Dozer they removed 23 acres of dense thickets of African tulip, octopus tree and waiawi. They then reseeded and sprigged in Baron Goto, white clover, Gatton panic, and mulatto grass. With the use of cross fences, they installed 3900' of Woven wire fence and were able to cut the pasture up into 5 paddocks averaging around 4.6 acres each. They installed 75' of pipe and a single 300 gallon water trough that all the paddocks funnel into, to provide access to clean drinking water. Chemical Brush management and Herbaceous weed control were applied



Shiroma Pasture Before Restoration

later to kill any regrowth and weeds that remained in the pasture. After a year of deferred grazing and letting the pasture rest, the cattle were brought back in. Prescribed grazing was implemented to achieve proper grazing rotation and rest periods.

Sadly in 2014, Thomas Shiroma had passed away before the project was completed. Faced with the setback, daughter Clarice Suzuki along with her family pulled through and completed the contract in March 2015. Throughout the blood, sweat, and tears, the Shiroma family has come together to make Thomas Shiroma Proud! Congratulations to Clarice Suzuki and the Shiroma family for being dedicated ranchers and being selected for the Waiakea SWCD 2014 Outstanding Rancher Cooperator of the Year Award.



Clarice Suzuki in Her Restored Pasture

Hilo Field Office Staff

Hamakua, Waiakea, Keaau, Puna SWCD and NRCS



(From top L to R) Spencer Nagata, Soil Conservationist - NRCS; Kamran Fujimoto, Soil Conservationist – SWCD; Alicia Greene, Civil Engineer – NRCS; Alex Gerkin, Crep Planner - State of Hawaii; Laila Jayyousi, Soil Conservationist – NRCS; Jill Ficke-Beaton, Soil Conservationist – NRCS; Harrison Vidinha, Conservation Specialist – HACD/SWCD; Amelia Drury, Soil Conservationist – SWCD; Jennifer Reavis, District Secretary/ Conservation Aide – SWCD; Amy Koch, GIS Specialist/Resource Soil Scientist – NRCS; Kori Hisashima, District Conservationist – NRCS; Kanoë Malani, Soil Conservationist - SWCD



Ka'u Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair



Brenda Iokepa-Moses, Chair

Ka'u Soil and Water Conservation District (KSWCD) current dedicated board of directors are: Brenda Iokepa-Moses, Ka'u Farms Management and Ka'u Coffee Mill; Amos Meyers, retired School Teacher; Lani Cran-Petrie with Kapapala Ranch; Chris Manfredi, Ka'u Farm and Ranch; and John Cross, Edmund C. Olson Trust. All members of the board bring something different to the table and this diversity and experience helps them in their decision making and recommendations.

Due to the recent activity at the Hawaii National Park with the spectacular lava show brought thousands of additional visitors to the rural area of Ka'u. Ka'u coffee picked up in sales as many visitors fell in love with their first taste of this mild smooth tasting coffee from Ka'u. Coffee farmers are still facing challenges with keeping Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) out of their fields but have been very successful in doing so with less than 5% infestation in the area. Macnut industry find themselves in the same predicament with the macadamia felted coccid. Governor Abercombie signed bill to allocate \$500,000 to subsidize fungal sprays to combat the CBB and another \$360,000 for the Macadamia felted coccid. Ka'u celebrated farmers at their 7th annual Ka'u Coffee Festival held in the town of Pahala on May 2nd. Thousands of visitors coming to the festival to enjoy free entertainment while tasting some of the worlds best coffee. See www.kaucoffeefestival.com for more details and upcoming festival. With our district being comparable in size to the Island Of Oahu it is a challenge just getting to our clients. With the drive being an hour or two away from the field office a lot of time is spent on the road getting to these rural area clients. With the help of our partner NRCS they make it work with careful planning.

Jennifer Lopez Reavis heads our Field Office Operations that not only handles Ka'u district but also the districts of Puna and Waiakea. Amelia Drury, a very talented full time planner with engineering skills under her belt providing knowledge nationwide through the Waiakea, Puna, and Ka'u Soil and Water Conservation District. Seasoned part time planner Kamran Fujimoto reaches out to farmers on weekends and after hours to make it more convenient for them. A special mahalo to Mayor Billy Kenoi, Jane Horike and Glenn Sako with the County of Hawaii R&D, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other affiliated agencies for their continued support of the agricultural community.



John Cross, Vice Chair



Amos Meyers, Secretary-Treasurer



Lani Petrie, Director



Chris Manfredi, Director

Ka'u Soil and Water Conservation District

TD Ranch, 2014 Cooperator of the Year

Mr. Thomas Dean Kaniho and his wife Tissy, own and operated TD Ranch, the southernmost ranch in the United States. Their 48 acre home parcel is located on South Point Road within the Ka'u Soil and



Water Conservation District. Dean uses this property to raise replacement heifers, fatten steers and train his horses.

Dean started working with Ka'u SWCD planner Grant Kow and NRCS back in 2012 to clear dense brush and replant the area with better forage. Major resource concerns were inadequate forage quantity and quality, noxious and invasive species and inadequate water. Area was densely covered in Christmas berry and Lantana brush. Once his conservation plan got approval for EQIP funding, he

started to hand clear with chainsaw alongside the roadway, due to a stone wall that had to be preserved. Once that was completed, Dean had a bulldozer come in, clear, and roll 20 acres of dense Christmas berry trees. He then reseeded it with Gatton panic grass to increase his forage quantity and quality. This past year, Dean finished planting 1,730' of Gliricidia windbreaks, 1,360' of barb wire cross fencing, cutting his pasture into 6 paddocks, 760' of pipe and 2 water troughs. This next year he still has 20 acres of chemical brush management and Prescribed grazing to complete.



Dean has done an excellent job in imple-



menting his conservation plan and a true blessing to work with, no if's, and's, or but's. As a result of his hard work, his pasture is rid of Christmas berry and his forage is head high. You don't see ranchers in Kau, mowing their pasture because they have too much grass! I would like to congratulate Dean and Tissy Kaniho for their dedication and hard work and for being awarded Ka'u Soil and Water Conservation District "2014 Outstanding Rancher of the Year Award". *Soil Conservationist: Spencer Nagata*

Puna Soil and Water Conservation District

Message from the Chair



Oliver English, Chair

The Puna Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) have been instrumental in conservation planning and accomplishments throughout the agricultural lands in the Puna District.

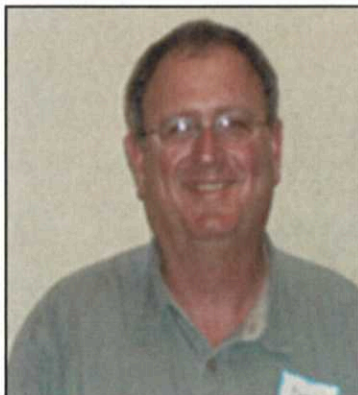
With the assistance of full time district employees, Amelia Drury, Jennifer Reavis, and part time employee Kamran Fujimoto, the Puna District was able to assist 60+ Cooperators in 2014. The District continues to be one of the fastest growing districts in the State of Hawaii.

Invasive species are increasing in this district as more nurseries and potted plant cooperators start to expand. The fire ant are spreading to higher elevations. Other pests of interest include the macadamia nut felt-ed coccid and coqui frog. Animal waste remains a district priority, other critical issues are water quality, noxious weeds, and soil erosion control.

We would like to thank the many governmental agencies that assist in the District programs. The State Legislature through DLNR, USDA Natural Resource and Conservation Service for supporting the SWCDs, the UH Extension Service for their assistance, and the County of Hawaii Research & Development for their funds to hire District Employees.



Aileen Yeh, Vice Chair



David Schell, Secretary and Treasurer



Rand Cabral, Director

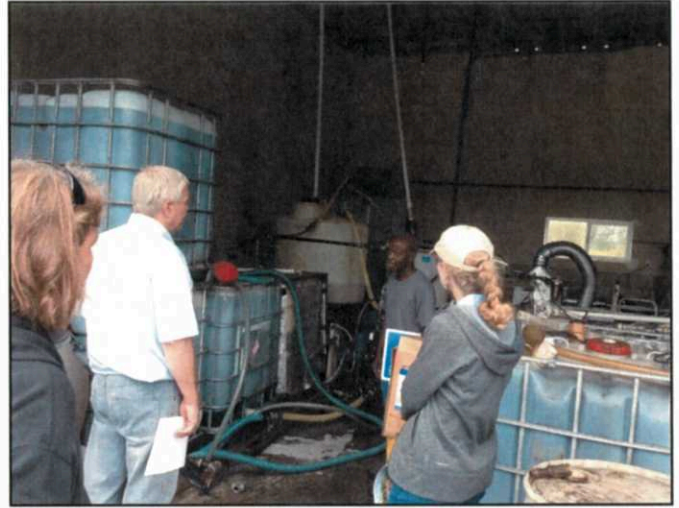


Ross Sibuciao, Director

Puna Soil and Water Conservation District

Mr. Atto Assi and Neena Ramel, 2014 Cooperator of the Year

Mr. Atto Assi and his partner Neena Ramel, own and operate their 25 acre farm, located off of Highway 11, in Mt. View, Hawai'i. The farm is located in Puna, within the Puna Soil and Water Conservation District. Atto uses this property to raise pigs and Oil Palm Trees, and they also make biofuel, soap and cooking oil from the Oil Palm Trees.

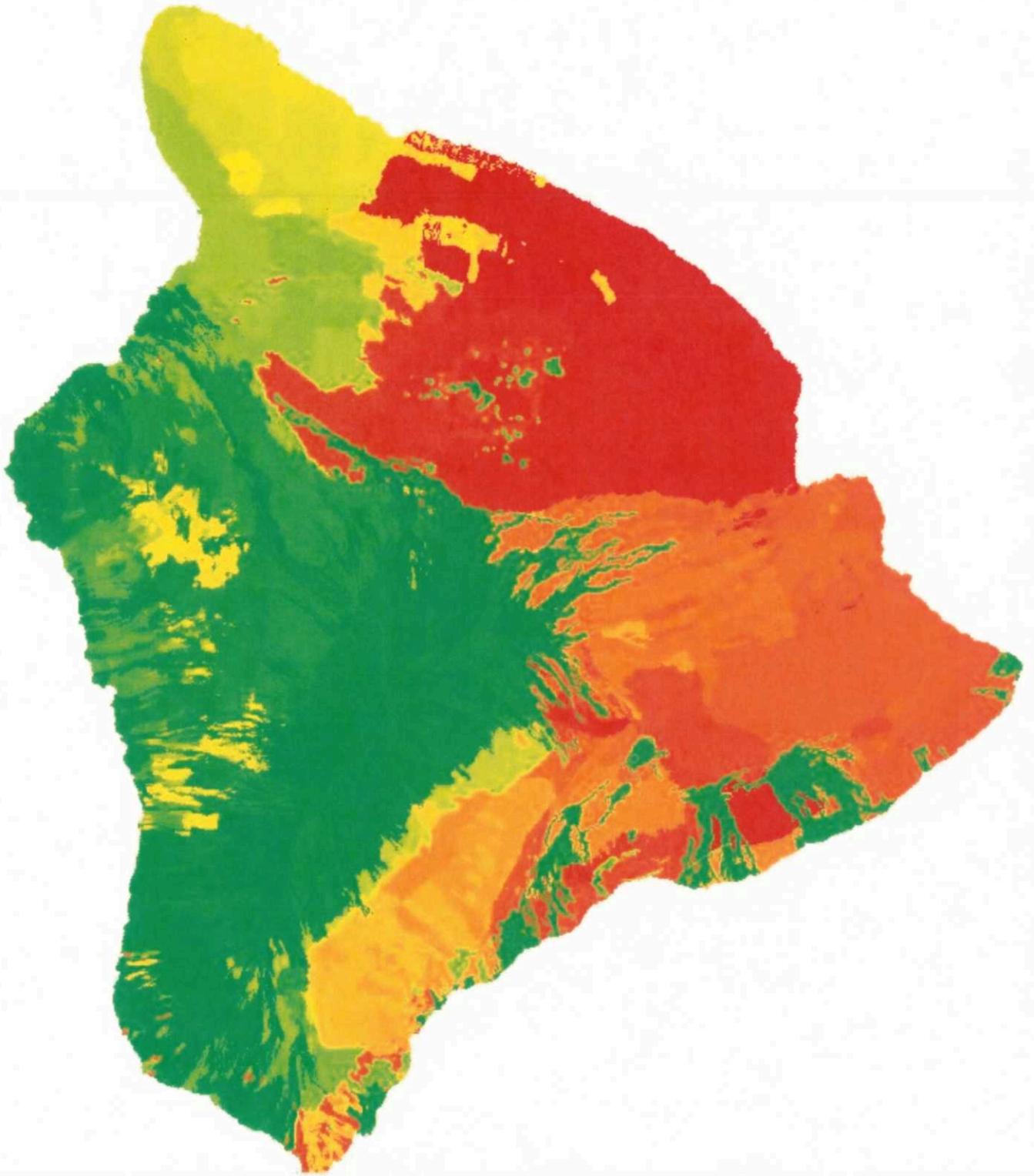


Atto started working with Puna SWCD and NRCS back in 2013 to construct a 20 sow, deep litter system for his pigs. The resource concerns associated with the pigs are surface and ground water contamination and inadequate livestock water. Once his conservation plan got approval for EQIP funding under the National Water Quality Initiative, he hired a licensed contractor to construct the deep litter operation. The structure is a 3000 square feet building that will house 20 sows, two boars and feeder pigs. The construction of the deep litter system will not allow any contaminants into the surface or ground water. The system is a stress-free animal environment which makes for happy pigs!

Atto has done an excellent job in implementing his conservation plan. We would like to thank Atto and Neena for their hard work and dedication to conservation and congratulate them on being awarded the Puna Soil and Water Conservation District "2014 Outstanding Cooperator of the Year Award".

Soil Conservationist: Laila Jayyousi





Depicted above are the soil classifications of Hawai'i Island. As you can see the soils in Hawai'i are incredibly diverse despite the island's small area.

Funding for the production of this annual report is through Hawai'i
County's Department of Research and Development

